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UNCLAS KABUL 005201

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SUBJECT: JAILED JOURNALIST ALI MOHAQIQ NASAB RELEASED WITH
SUSPENDED SENTENCE

REF: KABUL 4884

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY. Jailed journalist Ali Mohaqiq Nasab was released from jail with a suspended six-month sentence. During the hearing Nasab gave a one-sentence apology stating, "I ask the court to forgive me if I caused any confusion and problem." This statement appeased the court and the original two-year sentence was reduced to six-months, half of which will be suspended. Nasab's reduced and suspended sentence was not welcomed by the prosecutor, who argued that Nasab should be sentenced to death for supporting conversion from Islam to other religions. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) On December 21, the Appeal Court of Afghanistan held a public hearing on Nasab's case and reduced his two-year prison sentence to six-months. Since Nasab had been incarcerated for the past three months the remaining three-months were suspended. The court warned Nasab that over the next three months his behavior will be closely monitored and any violation of the law will result in his arrest and possible increase in jail time.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Comment. The consensus of the international community members who attended the hearing is that Nasab's case was not a case about freedom of speech, but rather a case about freedom of religion. End Comment.

NEUMANN